

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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DRAFTED BY NEA/PAB:PWLANDE/MW
APPROVED BY NEA:ALATHERTON, JR.
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R 190045Z SEP 76
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY DACCA
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IN, BG

SUBJECT: CALL BY BANGLADESH AMBASSADOR: FARAKKA IN THE
UN

1. AMBASSADOR SIDDIQI CALLED ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY
ATHERTON SEPTEMBER 15 TO REVIEW BDG'S POSITION ON FARAKKA
DISPUTE AND TO ASK FOR USG SUPPORT IN THE UN. SIDDIQI
REVIEWED BDG POSITION ALONG LINES PREVIOUSLY REPRTE
BY EMBASSY DACCA AND STATED THAT BDG BELIEVED IT HAD NO
ALTERNATIVE TO TURNING TO THE UN IN VIEW OF GOI INTRANSI-
GENCE. IN RESPONSE TO ATHERTON'S QUESTION, AMBASSADOR
INDICATED THE BDG DID NOT REALLY KNOW WHAT IT WANTED TO
ACHIEVE IN THE UN BUT HAD SOME SORT OF VAGUE FEELING THAT
UN DEBATE WOULD RESULT IN INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE ON INDIA
TO MODIFY ITS POSITION. AMBASSADOR STATED THAT AS FAR AS
HE KNEW, BDG UN PROPOSAL WOULD RELATE ONLY TO WATER
DISPUTE AND BDG DID NOT PLAN TO RAISE THE BORDER INCURSION
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PROBLEM. AMBASSADOR ADDED THAT BDG BELIEVED THAT PROBLEM

WAS NOT PRIMARILY ECONOMIC, I.E. THERE WAS ADEQUATE WATER TO SERVE THE NEEDS OF BOTH COUNTRIES, BUT INDIAN POLITICAL WILLINGNESS TO DEAL WITH PROBLEM APPEARED TO BE LACKING. PROBLEM THEREFORE WAS HOW TO PRODUCE THIS POLITICAL WILL.

2. ATHERTON REVIEWED USG POSITION ON FARAKKA ISSUE. USG CONTINUED TO BELIEVE THAT ONLY EFFECTIVE MANNER TO HANDLE PROBLEM WAS BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS. WHILE WE COULD APPRECIATE BDG'S CONCERN ABOUT WATER PROBLEM AND DIFFICULTIES IN NEGOTIATING WITH INDIANS THE SOLUTION WOULD STILL ULTIMATELY HAVE TO BE FOUND ON A BILATERAL BASIS. NEVERTHELESS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH USG'S GENERAL POSITION ON SUCH PROCEDURAL MATTERS USG WOULD SUPPORT BDG ON INSCRIPTION OF ITEM ON UN AGENDA. USG HAS NO SUGGESTIONS OF ITS OWN ON HOW TO RESOLVE PROBLEM AND HAS MADE NO DECISION ON HOW TO PROCEED ON THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE IN THE UN. WE ARE CONTINUING TO URGE INDIA TO RESUME MEANINGFUL BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS WITH BANGLADESH.

3. AMBASSADOR THANKED ATHERTON FOR USG SUPPORT ON PROCEDURAL ISSUE. HE DID NOT PRESS FOR ANY FURTHER SUPPORT OR USG INVOLVEMENT. INDEED, HE APPEARED AS UNCERTAIN AS WE ARE ON HOW THIS ISSUE WOULD BE HANDLED BY BDG FROM NOW ON. ROBINSON

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